

Survey on the Feasibility of Establishing a Language Access Resource Center in Hawaii

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a report based on the results of a study made in response to State of Hawaii Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 67 SD1/Senate Resolution (SR) 40 SD1, Regular Session of 2008, requesting the Office of Language Access to conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of a centralized language access resource center in Hawaii. The study conducted an assessment of the need for language access and a survey of costs associated with the provision of language access services, including an analysis of costs and benefits for establishing the center.

The data for this study were collected from an online survey conducted in late 2008, with 61 respondents representing various organizations (mostly state agencies) in Hawaii. The study also included interviews and culled findings from related studies to supplement the survey data, and to provide a cost-benefit analysis of the feasibility of a centralized, statewide language center.

Findings. The major findings of the study are:

- Limited English proficient (LEP) persons constitute an average of 5 to 8 percent of total clients served by the respondents' agencies in the last three months preceding the survey. The top LEP groups are: Ilokano, Micronesians (Chuukese, Marshallese, Yapese), Japanese, Chinese, Spanish, Korean, Samoan, Visayan, Vietnamese, and other Pacific Islanders;
- Besides Asians, the demand for language access services by certain Pacific Islander groups (Chuukese, Marshallese, Pohnpeian, Samoan, and Tongan) is high and increasing, based on available state expenditures and other data on LEP persons;
- Data on financial costs indicate that more than half of the organizations surveyed said they relied heavily on free or voluntary services offered by their own bilingual staff, friends or relatives. This reliance has enormous implications on the cost and quality of language services;
- Interpreters and translators, including agencies that provide for language access services, are available in Hawaii. However, many of these interpreters and translators may or may not be qualified, or competent, to provide quality services. In addition, the language service delivery system in Hawaii remains fragmented, limited, and uncoordinated;
- Majority of agencies surveyed favored the establishment of a centralized language access resource center that will serve all state agencies and covered entities; and
- Cost-benefit analysis suggests that a centralized language access resource center in Hawaii is necessary and advantageous to meet existing needs of or demand for language access services by LEP persons. Using a "social-return-to-investment" framework, the expected benefits appear to outweigh the costs involved.

Recommendations. The study has limitations given its small sample size (61 respondents) and limited data. Therefore, its results may not be very conclusive and a more comprehensive study may be needed. It is apparent though that training for bilingual staff and

interpreters is a major concern and that there is a need to coordinate the delivery of language services in Hawaii. In addition, although preliminary, the study results seem to indicate a need and support for the establishment of a language access resource center. Given these, the following are recommended:

1. Training for bilingual staff of state and state-funded agencies, as well as for interpreters and translators, be immediately implemented to ensure the delivery of quality language access services; and
2. A task force be created by the legislature composed of major state agencies, the Office of Language Access, and other stakeholders to look into the structure, functions, costs, and funding of the proposed language access resource center, or any alternatives thereto.

BACKGROUND

This report presents the results of the survey conducted in Hawaii about persons with limited English proficiency (LEP), and the feasibility of establishing a centralized language resource center. Hawaii is one among the top four states - behind California, Texas and New York - with a high percentage of LEP persons.

Who are LEP persons? According to the 2006 American Community Survey (ACS) of the US Census Bureau, roughly 24% of Hawaii's population of 1.2 million speak a language other than English at home. Furthermore, the same source reports that about 11% of the total Hawaii population 5 years and older speak English "less than very well" (or "not at all").¹ Whichever indicator is used, Hawaii registers a greater percentage than the national average.

Executive Order 13166 issued by President William Clinton in 2000 addresses the need for language access services: "to improve access to federally conducted and federally assisted created programs and activities for persons who, as a result of national origin, are limited in their English proficiency."² Subsequent guidance for implementation of this order has narrowed the meaning of LEP as those "individuals who [on account of national origin] do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English," and who are "entitled to language assistance with respect to a particular type of service, benefit or encounter."³

Legal Mandate

The present survey was conducted in response to the State of Hawaii Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 67, SD1/SR40 SD1, Regular Session of 2008, "requesting the Office of Language Access to conduct a feasibility study on establishing a statewide centralized language access resource center."⁴ In 2006, the State recognized that language is a barrier for LEP individuals' full participation in Hawaii's social and economic life, hence passed Act 290 (codified into Hawaii Revised Statutes §§ 371-31 to -37) to break down such language barriers

¹ "2006 American Community Survey for Hawaii," <http://hawaii.gov/dbedt/info/census/ACS2006>.

² "Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," August 11, 2000. Available in <http://www.doj.gov/crt/cor/Pubs/eolep.php>.

³ Department of Justice, "Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons," *Federal Register*, Vol. 67, No. 117 / Tuesday, June 18, 2002. Available at http://onlineresources.wnylc.net/pb/orcdocs/LARC_Resources/DOJGuidance/DOJGuidance.htm. See also Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) § 371-32, which defines LEP persons as "individuals who, on account of *national origin*, do not speak English as their primary language and who identify themselves as having a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand the English language" (Emphasis added). This definition is also used by a larger body, the Federal Interagency Working Group on Limited English Proficiency, see website at <http://www.lep.gov/faqs/faqs.html>.

⁴ Letter of Senator Brian T. Taniguchi to Senate President Colleen Hanabusa re: SCR No. 67, SD1, April 11, 2008, Stand. Com. Rep. No. 3542.

by requiring state agencies and organizations receiving state funding to “take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to services, programs, and activities” for those affected individuals “free of charge.”

In practical terms, the law requires government agencies and covered entities to improve their services, particularly for immigrants and native-borns alike who have limited English proficiency.⁵ Among the means envisioned are the provision of interpretation services and translated documents to immigrants and other non-native residents whose primary language is other than English. This will ensure that these persons receive basic services like all others, regardless of their inability to communicate.

Objectives

This study seeks to determine the feasibility of establishing a centralized language resource center in Hawaii. In doing so, it conducted the following:

1. Needs assessment, to know the magnitude of the problem involving LEP individuals or groups; and
2. Financial survey, to make a cost estimate of providing language access services for these individuals or groups, including a cost-benefit analysis of putting up a language resource center.

Sources of Data

The data that shed light on the above objectives are based primarily on an online survey conducted by the consultant between September and November 2008 through the SurveyMonkey.com.⁶ Some questionnaires, however, were mailed by postal means. The study also conducted interviews, and culled findings from related studies, to get additional data in support of the survey information.⁷ These interviews and related studies were likewise used here to make a strong case for cost-benefit analysis and social feasibility of a language access resource center in Hawaii.

⁵ “Covered entities” means those non-governmental/non-profit organizations that receive “state financial assistance, including grants, purchase-of-service contracts, or any financial arrangement with the state...for the purpose of rendering services to the public.” See HRS § 371-32.

⁶ See its official website, <http://www.surveymonkey.com/>.

⁷ The interviews, mainly by telephone (along with emails), took place in February 2009. Some important studies/documents on language access and LEP used here are those of the Office of Management and Budget, Department of Justice, and the Alaska Court System, among others.

THE ISSUE

Hawaii is the most multicultural community in the nation and an exemplar of a “melting pot” nowhere matched in North America.⁸ According to the 2006 American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA) Data, 23.5 percent of Hawaii’s population 5 years and older speak a language at home other than English,⁹ compared to only 19.7 percent for the United States. This percentage translates to over 287,000 persons. In the same vein, 10.6 percent of population 5 years and older speak English “less than very well” or “none at all,” which are estimated to be roughly 130,000 persons.¹⁰ These two indicators are officially used to define those who are “limited English proficient” (LEP) individuals.

Most LEP persons are foreign-born Asians and non-citizens, rather than native-born and naturalized citizens. The Migration Policy Institute reported that 49.7 percent of foreign-born persons 5 years and older and 55.4 percent of non-citizens were LEP persons, as compared to 2.4 percent of native-born and 45.6 percent of naturalized citizens.¹¹ The number of LEP persons, however, has been reportedly declining since 2000 among foreign-born, although this population group has increased considerably. Hawaii’s Department of Education, for example, noted that the number of LEP students increased by only 40 percent during a ten-year period covering 1992-2003 compared to an increase of over 70 percent during 1991-2000.¹² However, Hawaii is still one among those western states, including Florida, that registered a high density of at least 10 percent in LEP enrollment in K-12 student population in 2004-05.¹³

Aside from their Asian origin, most of the LEP persons in Hawaii are immigrants coming mainly from the Pacific Islands and Latin America, a large number of whom are unable to speak, read and write in English well enough to be understood. Together, the three groups alone constitute more than half (59%) of Hawaii’s total population, according to the 2000 US Census. Additionally, the 2006 ACS reported that 17.5 percent of Hawaii’s adult residents are foreign-born, while it is only 11.1 percent for the nation.¹⁴ Among the foreign-born, 27.2 percent of

⁸ Hawaii ranks number 1 in terms of “mixed population” at 21.5 percent compared to the nation at 2 percent. It has the highest percentage of Asian populations and Pacific Islanders, says the 2006 American Community Survey for Hawaii, US Census Bureau, henceforth referred to as *2006 ACS*. Cited in <http://hawaii.gov/dbedt/info/census/ACS2006>.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Migration Policy Institute (MPI Data Hub), *Fact Sheet on the Foreign Born*, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/dataHub/state2.cfm?ID=HI>.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² See “Superintendent’s Annual Reports,” Hawaii Department of Education, in http://arch.k12.hi.us/state/superintendent_report/sar2000.html and http://arch.k12.hi.us/state/superintendent_report/sar2008.html.

¹³ “The Growing Numbers of Limited English Proficient Students,” http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/policy/states/reports/statedata/2004LEP/GrowingLEP_0405_Nov06.pdf.

¹⁴ *Hawaii Quickfacts from the US Census Bureau*, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/15000.html>.

Asians and Pacific Islanders are considered LEP (speak English “less than very well” or “not at all”).

The 2000 US Census also reveals that Hawaii is one among four states (California, the District of Columbia, and New Mexico) which are now “majority-minority” states. This means that minority ethnic groups are the numerically dominant populations. In five states - California, Hawaii, New Mexico, New York, and Texas - more than 10 percent of residents have limited English proficiency.

In view of this cultural and linguistic diversity, problems have arisen with respect to employment, housing, legal, and even interpersonal relations. Discrimination in jobs and housing are specific problems that could result from language barriers. These are “tabooed practices” which run counter to the tenets of democracy and quality for which the United States stands for.

The belief in equality is enshrined in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended), which provides that no person shall “on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance” (Section 601). Title VI has provided the basis for Executive Order 13166, which in turn directs the Department of Justice to prepare the guideline for compliance standards and recommit the federal government to improving the accessibility of government-funded services to LEP individuals.¹⁵ According to the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division:

[This] Executive Order requires Federal agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to those with limited English proficiency (LEP), and develop and implement a system to provide those services so LEP persons can have meaningful access to them. It is expected that agency plans will provide for such meaningful access consistent with, and without unduly burdening, the fundamental mission of the agency. The Executive Order also requires that the Federal agencies work to ensure that recipients of Federal financial assistance provide meaningful access to their LEP applicants and beneficiaries.

In the past, no focused government intervention has been done to deal with this type of individuals. While interpretation and translation are conducted by some organizations to accommodate these persons or groups, much is yet to be desired. Quality interpreter and translation services are lacking and fragmented, made on a case-by-case basis, and limited, thereby excluding many LEP persons or groups.

Whereas some states (e.g., Washington and New York) have long established programs on language interpretation and translation, the state of Hawaii has only recently embarked on this project. There is now a system of certification for legal interpreters in the Hawaii Judiciary for criminal cases. Other fields of endeavor have yet to fully comply with Hawaii’s language access

¹⁵ See *Report to Congress: Assessment of the Total Benefits and Costs of Implementing Executive Order No. 13166: Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency*, Mar. 14, 2002; available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/inforeg/regpol.html>; also see the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, on Executive Order 13166; available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/13166.php>.

law in accordance with Title VI and Executive Order 13166 regulations. Moreover, the state allows organizations to contract some language assistance outfits to provide interpretation services, but leaves them to assess the qualifications of their interpreters and monitoring the quality of their services. These service providers are paid directly for all interpretation services, regardless of fees.

Methodology

In this research, the basic procedure for data gathering was the use of a questionnaire. From a template (instrument applied in Alaska) provided by the Office of the Language Access, the consultant developed a survey form and sent it out to respondents together with a letter from the OLA's Executive Director requesting them to participate in the survey. See Appendices A-B. It was administered through a website known as the SurveyMonkey.com.¹⁶ Questionnaires, however, were mailed for those respondents who did not have access to the internet, or felt more comfortable with answering the survey by filling out a hard copy of the form.

The survey was submitted for review to the Hawaii Language Access Advisory Council, whose suggestions were then incorporated in the final survey form before its administration. Actual data collection began on September 27, 2008 and ran through until November 15, 2008. After sending out the survey forms to all the respondents, 2-3 follow up emails were sent and telephone calls made to insure more returns. The draft of the feasibility study was also reviewed by the Council, whose recommendations were considered in the preparation of the final report.

Subsequent interviews of some agency officials were also done, and a review of relevant studies or documents on language access was conducted to enrich the survey.

Population and Sampling

Some 260 respondents were initially identified, which include some 150 state agencies and their major divisions, and 110 non-governmental organizations and institutions. (The actual number of organizations and agencies that would qualify is likely larger than this number.) Of the total, however, some 50 cases are found to have invalid or expired emails, could not be contacted in their previous addresses, retired from work, or refused to answer. Thus, the attrition left us a clean list of 210 cases for the survey, which roughly represent the identified "population."

The data for this research mostly came from 61 usable (complete) questionnaires representing 30%, or somewhat less than a third, of the total identified population. This number comprises our "sample" in a technical sense. Surprisingly, 39% of the returns came by the traditional way – by mail. About 61% of the completed forms were submitted online.

Additional information was obtained by interviewing officials of selected organizations and culling, or re-analyzing, data from related studies on language access and LEP individuals.

¹⁶ For details, see http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=gu42cDLVamfWzRtHxMLTBg_3d_3d.

Such data were used mostly for the financial survey and cost-benefit analysis of establishing a language resource center.

The low-return rate of the online survey seems to be a characteristic of an impersonal survey like this, especially using the internet to collect data. Also, letters and telephone calls are somewhat less conducive to establishing rapport and securing personal trust, which are important considerations in motivating respondents to reply. The ideal would have been to use personal interviews to secure a higher return rate in survey research. Given the time and resource limitations, however, it is not possible to do this methodology.

Concerning the profile of the respondents, the table below shows the organizational categories where they belong. A hefty majority (72%) of those who returned the completed questionnaires obviously represent county agencies or state organizations.

Covered entities, i.e. private, non-government organizations, are under-represented in the survey. Efforts to generate a comprehensive database of all covered entities are very much needed. Some large state agencies serving big LEP populations also failed to respond (e.g., many Complex Areas of the Department of Education and some campuses of the University of Hawaii).

Table 1: Reported organizational affiliations of the respondents

Categories	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Bank/credit union	1	1.6	1.6
County agency	26	42.6	42.6
Church/religious organization	2	3.3	3.3
Federally funded state agency	10	16.4	16.4
Educational institution	4	6.6	6.6
Hospital/health organization	8	13.1	13.1
Non-federally funded state agency	8	13.1	13.1
Public relations agency	2	3.3	3.3
TOTAL	61	100.0	100.0

Data Analysis

All the completed returns have been double-checked and “cleaned out,” and a matrix developed for encoding the data in spreadsheet style using Microsoft Excel. Dry runs were then made to make sure that no computer glitches would occur on the way.

The data from SurveyMonkey.com and the mailed questionnaires were then transferred to the spreadsheet.

Actual data crunching was done through the use of SPSS or Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, which was obtained from and licensed by the University of Hawaii ITS Department.

Simple frequency tabulations and computations of percentages were done to translate raw data into usable information.

Reliability/Validity

The survey instrument was tested for reliability, defined here as equivalent to “consistency and dependability of data,” by comparing responses of people for two or more similar questions.¹⁷ If the responses more or less agree with each other for such related items, then the instrument is deemed consistent, hence adjudged reliable. An example is the item “Arabic” as a client in question number 2. A respondent who gives this as an answer for a person with limited English ability should also check “Arabic” language or “Iraqi/Arabic” in the next question for a “current or potential client.” Rightly so, the respondents who admitted having Arabic clients also answered both questions as expected.

A rough indication of reliability can be seen from the agreement between two independently derived sources on the top language groups, which are host to many LEP persons. Using the 2006 ACS data, the Office of Language Access has listed these persons based on the minimum threshold of 1,000 LEP individuals for each group, as follows:¹⁸

1. Tagalog
2. Ilokano
3. Japanese
4. Chinese (Mandarin & Cantonese)
5. Korean
6. Vietnamese
7. Visayan
8. Samoan
9. Spanish
10. Other Pacific Islanders
11. Hawaiian

A special note is in order regarding “Tagalog.” Although this language is among the top five foreign languages spoken in Hawaii, there are reasons to doubt it as the main source of LEP persons from the Philippines. According to Dr. Belinda A. Aquino, University of Hawaii at Manoa, “at least 85 percent of Hawaii’s Filipinos are Ilokano speakers who come from northern Luzon.”¹⁹ Since almost all Filipinos speak Tagalog – the *lingua franca* or “national language” in

¹⁷ Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*. 10th ed. Belmont, CA: Thompson/Wadsworth, 2004, p. 141.

¹⁸ For a language group to be considered in the top list, it must have at least 1,000 LEP persons.

¹⁹ See <http://www.hawaii.edu/cps/fil-community.html>. The predominance of Ilokanos among Filipino immigrants is confirmed by officials and staff of Catholic Charities, Center for Violence Against Women, Pacific Gateway Center, and Susannah Wesley Community Center (telephone interviews with Melba Bantay, Sr. Earnest Chung, Helena

the Philippines - this was temporarily removed from the list for the purposes of comparison with our survey data. The results of our survey showed the language groups of LEP people in this order, as follows:²⁰ 1) Ilokano, 2) Japanese, 3) Other Pacific Islanders, 4) Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), 5) Spanish, 6) Korean, 7) Samoan, 8) Visayan, 9) Vietnamese, and 10) Hawaiian. The observed consistency between the two rankings is moderately high and satisfactory by certain standard, attesting to the survey instrument's modest reliability.²¹

Also, it is worth mentioning here that the present survey form is a modified version of the Alaska language study (developed and conducted by the University of Alaska-Anchorage). Hence, it is presumed to be reliable in the setting where it was applied previously. As such, it shares with the current survey characteristics of a reliable instrument.

Validity, or the "extent to which an instrument is able to indicate what it purportedly measures," is not performed quantitatively on the survey form. However, there are reasons to believe that it possesses "content validity."²² That is, it shows specific references to relevant domain under study, and that some substantive features of the instrument can be adjudged valid by expert opinion. For example, an important domain is about specification/definition of LEP persons, which is understandable to most of the respondents.

However, the study cannot provide an *empirical validation* of the idea that a language resource center is feasible or not, nor can indicators for this be established with confidence. This is largely a philosophical and normative question that requires an advocacy action, and that availability of resources cannot be marshaled beforehand, let alone guaranteed. What the study has done is to verify that certain conditions and processes (e.g., needs and cost-benefit analysis) exist, or would allow such a center to be established.

In addition, the United States Department of Agriculture says that a feasibility study, being action-oriented, is itself not a "scientific study or academic research."²³ This makes empirical verification somewhat unnecessary.

Manzano, Delta Repunte, and Dominic Inocelda). Ms. Manzano, program director of CVW, estimated that Ilokanos constitute 80-90% of the total immigrants, at least based on their clients. Ms. Repunte of PGC and Mr. Inocelda of SWCC said that majority of their Filipino clients are Ilokanos, with "very few" Bisayans and Tagalogs.

²⁰ The number of LEP persons served by a sample of 61 organizations based on recall, that is, the "number of LEP clients who approached these organizations during the last three months." The 2006 ACS data reported here through the OLA was based on a larger sample of such type of persons.

²¹ Calculated from Spearman's rank correlation, the reliability coefficient is .59 (the correlation is not tested for significance as the sample is not strictly a random or probability sample).

²² Babbie, *op cit*, p. 145.

²³ "Cooperative Feasibility Study Guide," <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/pub/sr58.pdf>. October 2000.

FINDINGS

This report consists of two parts. Part 1 will provide data on two issues or concerns: (1) the needs assessment on the extent of linguistic problems arising from lack or inability to communicate in the English language with proficiency; and (2) cost estimate of providing interpretation, and translation services for LEP persons. Part II will analyze the third major issue for this survey, (3) the feasibility of establishing a Language Resource Center in Hawaii.

Given the rich diversity and multiculturalism in Hawaii, there is an inherent need to provide for some institutional mechanism that addresses current problems (including potential ones) related to the ability to communicate in the English language. There must be a body dedicated to the job of providing coherent or systemic support for language access activities, rather than leaving this vital function to the various agencies and organizations to their own devices.

This body, or center, will be responsible for institutionalizing language access to comply with the intent of the law, and be supportive of the Office of Language Access. It will also serve as a regulatory agency that will establish policies to professionalize and certify interpreters and translators in Hawaii, coordinate various departments with language access functions, prepare updated rosters of competent or qualified people who can do the job when needed, and produce databanks on various aspects of language access and LEP persons and the groups they come from.

Part One

We now present the survey data that seek answers to and understanding of basic problems about people with limited English proficiency, otherwise known as LEP individuals. The data are based on the responses of individuals representing state agencies and non-government organizations.

Need Assessment: Extent of LEP Problem

Certain questions are in order. What is the magnitude of the language problem associated with LEP persons in Hawaii? From what ethnic or linguistic groups do they come?

Asked what percent of their current clients speak a primary language other than English, the majority of the respondents disclosed answers ranging from 0 to 10 percent (see Table 2). Five respondents, however, reported that their organizations deal with 31 to 60 percent of such persons.

On another plane, reading from the table, it seems clear that the vast majority (about 70%) of the respondents have been approached by people who need help in their day-to-day interaction with others.

However, it appears that the range of responses for most organizations from whom help was requested by LEP persons is 1 to 10 percent, which is somewhat small. It probably indicates that the language barrier problem is not really that great as may have been believed.

Stated another way, the modal average is about 5 percent of the clients of those organizations surveyed who have encountered such a problem. (More technically, 6% is the median of those who reported to have met cases of LEP persons. The arithmetic mean is 7.8%.)

Table 2: Percent of current clients whose primary language is other than English

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
None (0)	20	32.8	32.8
1 to 10%	29	47.5	47.5
11 to 20%	5	8.2	8.2
21 to 30%	2	3.3	3.3
31 to 40%	3	4.9	4.9
41 to 50%	1	1.6	1.6
51 to 60%	1	1.6	1.6
Total	61	100.0	100.0

Question: "Overall, approximately what percentage of your current clients speak a primary language other than English?" (Mode= 5%, median = 6%, mean = 7.8%).

As to what these LEP persons are (ethnically or nationally), and how many of them are encountered by the respondents will now be shown in the next tabulation (see Table 3). Results of the tabulation conform to those of the preceding table; this time they are expressed in actual frequencies of LEP cases.

Table 3: Number of clients who speak exclusively some languages other than English, approached respondent during last three months

Language spoken	Frequency
a. Ilokano (Philippines)	18
b. Japanese/Nihongo (Japan)	17
c. Chuukese (Chuuk/Micronesia)	12
d. Spanish (Spain/Mexico/Puerto Rico/Latin America)	10
e. Marshallese (Marshall Islands)	10
f. Cantonese (China/Hong Kong)	9
g. Korean (Korea)	7
h. Samoan (Samoa)	6
i. Mandarin (China/Taiwan)	6
j. Indonesian (Indonesia)	5
k. Yapese (Yap/Micronesia)	5
l. Tongan (Tonga)	5
m. Palauan (Palau/Micronesia)	4
n. Cebuano/Hiligaynon/Visayan (Philippines)	4
o. Vietnamese (Vietnam)	4

p. Thai (Thailand)	4
q. Hmong (Laos/Thailand)	3
r. Hawaiian (Hawaii)	3
s. Fijian (Fiji)	3
t. Chamorro/Guamanian (Guam)	3
u. Other non-English languages/Unknown	3
v. Other non-English language (1 Tagalog, 2 Ponapean)	3
w. Marquesan (Marquesas Islands)	2
x. Portuguese (Portugal, Brazil)	1
y. Karen (Burma/Myanmar)	1
z. Hindi (India)	1
aa. Burmese (Burma/Myanmar)	1
ab. Arabic (Middle East)	1
ac. Tahitian (Tahiti)	1
ad. American Indian/Alaskan (mainland USA/Alaska)	1

Total number of cases with complete/valid answers = 61

Question: "Please indicate the number of clients who speak exclusively any of the languages (listed above) that approached your organization in the past 1-3 months."

As stated earlier, three immigrant groups in Hawaii form the majority of Hawaii's population. These are: Asians, Pacific Islanders, and Spanish speakers. The distribution of respondents in Table 3 more or less conform to this triumvirate, with Asians (Ilokanos, Japanese, Koreans, Mandarin and Indonesian), Spanish, and Pacific Islanders (Chuukese, Marshallese, Samoan, Yapese and Tongan) topping the list.

An independent report provided by an agency at the forefront of serving LEP persons has corroborated the names and rankings of the language groups shown in the table above. The Department of Human Services (DHS) indicated that its Language Division served a total of 1,333 "encounters" of which the top four are: ASL cases (26 percent), Chuukese (13 percent) Ilokanos (11 percent), and Marshallese (10 percent).²⁴ DHS met a total of 1,715 encounters from July 1 to December 31, 2008, which ranked Chuukese first, Ilokanos second and Marshallese third in the volume of served cases.

The other language encounters reported by the DHS, in rank order, are with these groups: Tagalog (70 language encounters), Cantonese (64), Micronesian (could be Chuukese, Yapese, etc., 62), Korean and Samoan (61 each), Japanese (46), Vietnamese (45), Mandarin (34), Spanish (28), Visayan (7), Tongan and, Kosraean (6 each), and "other" (30).²⁵ Of the DHS's four divisions, the BESSD (Benefit, Employment, and Support Services Division) has the most language encounters followed by SSD (Social Services Division). VR (Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division) has the largest encounters with ASL.

²⁴ Face-to-face interview with Ms. Geneva Watts of the Civil Rights Compliance Office, Department of Human Services. The data represent "language encounters" during the period July 1 to September, 2008. These "encounters" could mean repeat service given to a particular LEP individual whose language group is registered in the reporting tool.

²⁵ Data provided for July 1-September 31, 2008 by Ms. Watts during the interview and subsequent email correspondence.

Among the Asian groups, the Ilokanos from the Philippines stand out as possibly the group with the most LEP persons. The Cebuano Visayans, also from the Philippines, were similarly reported by the respondents, but these LEP cases come in much smaller numbers. Interestingly, our online survey data show that the Tagalog group has the fewest number of LEPs among the Philippine language groups. In other reports, the Tagalogs have the highest number, according to the Office of Language Access.²⁶ The anomaly can be explained by the following: (1) Tagalog was not listed in the survey choices to be checked by the respondents, (2) this language is spoken by most Filipinos, and could well refer to a generic language group or nationality, and (3) non-Filipinos associate “Tagalog” with any ethnic group from the Philippines, just as “Micronesians” is used as a collective term for Chuukese, Yapese and other language groups from that region. The other Asian groups observed to have many LEP clients are the Japanese, and to some extent the Koreans, Vietnamese, Thai, and Hmong.

Notice that no LEP persons from Europe crossed paths with the respondents. Also, there was only 1 case each from South Asia and the Middle East who were reported by the respondents. This doesn’t mean, however, that the problem of LEP is non-existent in these places. It only reflects the fact that there are very few cases from these regions, or that the respondents were aware of very limited cases at the time of the research.

Our subsequent probing asked the respondents the possibility of meeting LEP clients in the future. Table 4 shows the distribution of potential cases. Some respondents believed that they would meet some of them in the future, particularly from Europe. Four reported “Russians” as one such group representing LEP individuals, and about the same number expect to meet Turkish, Arabic and Uzbeks from the Middle East or Europe.

We have expected that the war in Iraq and Afghanistan would send waves of displaced residents to Hawaii, or to the nation. While the respondents have not confirmed this expectation, there could be some asylum seekers from those countries in the future who may find their way to this island state. In the past, this was the experience of Hawaii with respect to the Philippines, Vietnam, and Laos.

Table 4: Distribution of current or potential clients who speak some rare languages

Linguistic Group	Frequency
a. Russian (Russia)	4
b. Haitian Creole (Haiti)	1
c. Mien (Laos)	1
d. Arabic (Middle East)	1
e. Turkish (Turkey)	1
f. Uzbek (Uzbekistan)	1
g. Other non-English language	1

Question: “Do you have current or potential clients who speak some of these more rare languages?”

²⁶ Office of Language Access, *2008 Annual Report to the Governor and the State Legislature*.

Cost Estimate of Services

We now come to the resources used by organizations in providing interpretation and translation services to persons with limited English ability.

At the outset, it is important to note that about three-fourths of all the respondents acknowledged having been approached, or met, by LEP persons – although in varying degrees. The proportion of such persons served appears to be small, although close to the state’s norm (about 10% LEP population).

The next question we deal with now is, how much do organizations spend in service of LEP persons? That is, what is the cost of interpretation and translation (including training of interpreters and translators), and related language services?

Responses to this question, however, are pretty low and did not give us much detail. Most of the affected organizations have no information on how they are spending on this matter. Others are still “learning the ropes,” so to speak, while still others have just stated implementing the language access recently.²⁷ The lag in implementation is understandable. The language access law was passed in 2006, and implementation of its spirit began with the creation and operations of the Office of Language Access on April 25, 2007.

For the most part, agencies and covered entities rely on voluntary services from their own bilingual employees. We learned that 51 percent of the respondents made use of these services from such staff, which is why they did not report any amount on the cost of interpretation. Also, four respondents said they received voluntary services from other persons or outside agencies for language interpretation or translation.

In any case, we found language-related expenses by certain organizations from which data are available, sans the free services of language volunteers (Table 5). One organization is said to have spent \$10,000 for in-house interpreters (e.g., for training, seminars), while three spent from \$45,000 to \$75,000 on interpretation services (hired or contracted interpreters, including training). Two organizations whose officials were interviewed later - after the online survey - gave much higher expenditures of \$72,000 to \$320,000 for interpretation services.²⁸ The rest expended only a few hundred dollars to hire professional interpreters or engage telephonic interpretation services.

Table 5: Organizational expenses for interpretation/translation services during the previous year

Expenses for -	Frequency	Amount
a. Professional interpreters	3	\$50-75,000

²⁷ The Department of Human Services began to collect data on LEP and other language services (e.g., for ASL) in July 2008. “We are fully aware of the need for accurate data reporting and are doing our best to comply with the law,” says Mr. Henry Oliva, Deputy Director of the Department of Human Services, during a personal interview.

²⁸ These agencies are the Department of Human Services and the Hawaii Judiciary.

e. Interpretation by telephone service	3	\$400-69,000
c. Training of staff on interpretation	2	\$300-2,000
d. Outside agencies	1	\$45,000
e. In-house interpreters	1	\$10,000
Total	10	

Question: "How much did you spend last year for the services of certain professionals, including training of staff?"

We have not obtained financial costs of translating documents except for one agency, the Department of Human Services, which reported to have spent \$1,200 for 2008.²⁹

A detailed examination of the actual cost of interpretation from the Hawaii Judiciary may illustrate a good case of a state agency's handling of LEPs. Table 5.1 shows data from 2003 to 2007 for various types of language groups. The cost of interpretation alone – the most common kind of language access – runs from \$182,180 to \$310,303 (estimate) during 2003 to 2007.

Table 5.1: Fiscal Payments to Interpreters, 2003-2007

Languages (FY2007 rank)	FY2007 Rank	FY2007 \$ (Estim.)*	FY2006 \$ Total	FY2005 \$ Total	FY2004 \$ Total	FY2003 \$ Total
Chuukese	1	50,512	43,673	37,087	21,945	8,530
Ilokano	2	46,940	48,318	50,697	30,312	21,333
Vietnamese	3	31,738	31,399	32,366	19,915	18,695
Korean	4	30,925	31,425	29,076	26,715	22,735
Spanish	5	25,740	29,980	29,588	20,435	13,569
ASL	6	20,688	11,362	13,994		
Tagalog	7	19,493	10,698	8,400	4,735	3,778
Marshallese	8	12,094	15,510	14,646	9,483	6,050
Japanese	9	12,080	18,688	14,134	12,308	9,820
Samoan	10	10,529	15,735	13,756	11,365	8,540
Tongan	11	10,495	14,672	17,594	17,580	9,355
Pohnpeian	12	9,661	9,475	4,578	2,875	980
Cantonese	13	9,275	2,937	9,525	5,945	7,266
Mandarin	14	6,480	6,563	6,700	2,438	3,495
Laotian	15	4,675	3,175	3,950	1,545	2,251
Kosraean	16	975	1,163	681	315	260
Russian	17	800	425	250	140	40
Thai	18	700	4,197	1,190	120	290
Portuguese	19	700	475	325	180	120

²⁹ Data supplied by Geneva Watts during an interview.

Khmer	20	695	500	420	190	80
Others		5,109	6,567	6,536	2,587	2,625
TOTAL		\$310,303	\$320,486	\$299,602	\$198,649	\$182,180

*Estimated. Complete data are not available at the time of this study.

"Others" are too many language groups to enumerate here. This table is adapted from the files of Hawaii Judiciary, provided by Ms. Debi S. Tulang-De Silva in an email communication.

The cost estimates reported above apparently exclude "hidden" financial information in terms of "opportunity cost." That is, the un-remunerated services of bilingual staff and family members/friends who volunteer to act as interpreters and translators. The time they lose, including use of paid vacation leaves to accompany LEP persons, have not been factored in to this table.

Detailed data for the court interpreter program provided by the Hawaii Judiciary for the second quarter of 2008 suggest interesting results on the language groups that had received language services by oral interpretation.³⁰ Of the total \$72,868.29 spent for oral language services, more than three-fourths of this amount were used for seven linguistic groups alone: Chuukese (\$15,241.75 or 20.9%), Ilokano (\$12,401.45 or 17.02%), Vietnamese (\$8,797.05 or 12.1%), Korean (\$7,031.40 or 9.6%), Spanish (\$5,611 or 7.7%), Marshallese (\$3,783.90 or 5.2%), and Pohnpeian (\$3,008.65 or 4.1%). Note the high representation and expenditures for the Micronesian groups.

The financial data just shown, however, could not match up with the number of LEP cases served for whom those reported expenditures stand. The OLA does not have all the expenditures data at its disposal to correlate with LEP persons. It takes some time (up to six months) to complete them as the data come from different units of the Hawaii Judiciary.³¹

The data shown in the next table (Table 6) confirms the heavy reliance placed on language volunteers from most organizations, partly explaining why only a few have expenditures for the services required in language interpretation or translation (Table 5). In conjunction with this discovery, we found that less than a third (31 %) of the organizations made use of "professional" interpreters (including in-house interpreters).

According to some officers of state agencies, for example the Department of Human Services, they first looked around for available bilingual staff for language services before trying to hire professional interpreters or telephone interpreters.³² This could be explained by the fact that budgets for language access services may not be reflected yet on their budgets, or that funds are inadequate and too small to cover sudden demand for interpretation and translation, including

³⁰ Hawaii Judiciary – Language Services Expenditures (by language), Second Quarter 2008. From data furnished by Ms. Debi S. Tulang De Silva, Language Access Coordinator, Hawaii Judiciary, through email.

³¹ Telephone interview with Ms. Debi S. Tulang-De Silva.

³² Personal interviews with Mr. Henry Oliva, Deputy Director, Department of Human Services, and Ms. Geneva Watts, Civil Rights Compliance Staff of DHS.

unprogrammed in-house training of bilingual staff. Such experience is especially true for minor state agencies, or private organizations.³³

Table 6: Use of bilingual staff members who volunteer services for free

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
No	22	36.1	41.5
Yes	31	50.8	58.5
No answer/missing	8	13.1	-
Total	61	100.0	100.0

While use of bilingual staff and language volunteers for their free services is economically good for the organization, it also has its downsides.

Bilingual personnel who provide free services on language interpretation and translation may not be qualified, or competent, for this job. Personal discretion is likely to play out, as each interpreter uses his/her own personal standard. Left to their own devices, bilingual staff who volunteer their services may be guided by their knowledge of a language without regard to the nitty gritty of language use (e.g., grammar), or to its ethical mooring. In the health care setting, a study has found that using untrained interpreters among bilingual staff, family members and friends is associated with poorer self-reported understanding of diagnoses, increased numbers of interpreter errors of clinical consequence, and higher rates of testing and admission from emergency departments.³⁴

For those respondents whose organizations did spend time and money in language interpretation, the majority have reported that they are "satisfied" with the way their agencies handled interpretation services. However, more than half have no idea or opinion on how their organizations have dealt with LEP clients with respect to the three language interpretation issues (see Table 7).

³³ Telephone interview with Sr. Earnest Chung of Catholic Charities.

³⁴ Dennis Kuo et al, "Pediatrician's use of language services for families with limited English proficiency," *Pediatrics*, Vol. 119 No. 4 April 2007, pp. e920-e9.

Table 7: Respondents' satisfaction with the way their organization handles interpretation for LEP clients (Percent)

Issues	Very unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	No idea/DK
a. Costs	1.6	6.6	16.4	11.5	62.3
b. Interpreter qualifications	-	8.2	24.6	9.8	55.7
c. Use of interpreters	-	11.5	26.2	4.9	52.5
Total/range	1	4-7	10-16	3-6	32-28

Total/range here means the minimum/maximum number of cases actually expressing dissatisfaction or satisfaction.

Question: "Please tell us how satisfied you are with the way your organization handles (LEP) clients."

There is, however, strong agreement on the importance of these language issues. About two-thirds of the respondents think there is a need to address language interpretation issues in the future in terms of cost, using qualified interpreters, and increasing their level of proficiency and qualifications. More than half (61 to 66 %) say that these language issues are "somewhat important" to "very important" (Table 8).

Table 8: Perceived importance of certain language interpretation issues

Issues	Not at all important	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Very important	No idea/DK
a. Costs	8.2	6.6	6.6	47.5	26.2
b. Interpreter qualifications	9.8	11.5	11.5	42.6	19.7
c. Use of interpreters	9.8	13.1	14.8	36.1	21.3
Total/range	5-6	4-7	4-9	22-29	12-16

Total/range here means the minimum/maximum number of cases actually saying "not at all important" to "very important."

Question: "How important to your organization do you think these language interpretation issues are?"

Part Two

This section will now present more data and analysis of how feasible the establishment of a centralized statewide language resource center is. At first glance, the data presented in Part One lends evidence to the idea that such a center is needed and feasible. If one looks at the statistics on LEP persons, about 11 percent of Hawaii's population 5 years and over belong to this category (approximately 130,761 persons as of 2006).³⁵ This is relatively a big number to deal with. On the demand side, this is the number of LEP clients most likely to seek assistance

³⁵ 2006 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau; also 2008 Annual Report of the Office of Language Access submitted to the Governor. Note that LEP is based on those "who speak English less than very well or not at all" in these official documents.

for language services. The present survey has provided some insights into the other aspects of the problem that cannot be read from large aggregate data provided by the US Census.

Feasibility of a Statewide Language Resource Center

In dealing with the issue of “feasibility,” we have addressed certain conditions that exist on the ground. Then, based on some assumptions and financial expenditures, we made an analysis of the cost and benefits of launching a language resource center.

According to Wikipedia, “feasibility study is a preliminary study undertaken to determine and document a project's viability or the discipline of planning, organizing, and managing resources to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals and objectives.”³⁶

Another source says that “feasibility studies are preliminary investigations into the potential benefits associated with undertaking a specific activity or project.”³⁷

Both definitions seem to be widely accepted in the literature. However, in the present report we are also mindful of the fact that a feasibility study is just a part of the process in aid of making decisions about a particular project (e.g., a language resource center), as mandated by the State Legislature. It is also integral to the first stage of a project cycle, which begins with an idea carefully conceived and analyzed. Finally the project is implemented (i.e., if it is found feasible), and then evaluated at a future date for its merit or impact. The last two stages of the project cycle are not within the domain of a feasibility study. Furthermore, a feasibility study is *not* to be confused with an academic research or scientific study. The USDA has this to say:³⁸

A feasibility study is not an academic or research paper. A completed study should permit a group to make better decisions about the strategic issues of its specific project. The study is not a business plan that is developed later in the project development process and functions as a blueprint for the group's business operations...

While a feasibility study informs and helps justify a course of action in the face of many alternative actions (including inaction), it is important to realize that its success (measured by actually adopting/implementing the proposed language project) is dependent on a host of factors that lie beyond the investigative process.

First, in addition to the data shown in Part One, this report supplies other vital information regarding the creation of a Language Resource Center based on opinions of stakeholders and beneficiaries of this project. What do these stakeholders say? Do they feel the need for a statewide language resource center?

³⁶ “Feasibility Study,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feasibility_study.

³⁷ “What is a Feasibility Study?” <http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-a-feasibility-study.htm>.

³⁸ United States Department of Agriculture, “Cooperative Feasibility Study Guide.” <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/pub/sr58.pdf>, p. 3.

Second, the report has also attempted to provide some cost-benefit analysis of the project, as if it were one concerned with “profitability.” What are the benefits - versus the costs - of establishing a language access resource center in the state of Hawaii?

Let us now tackle the first issue. That is, survey data is shown that bring to bear on the basis for arguing that a language resource center is a necessity.

Asked whether they would approve or disapprove of this center, the majority of the respondents confirmed that they are in favor of the idea (see Table 9). It is worthwhile noting that more than two-thirds agreed with it, while only less than 10 percent did not favor its establishment. About a fifth, however, said they did not know what to say about it, or have yet to be informed regarding this center. One case did not have any answer, for or against, the proposed center.

Table 9: Perceptions on establishing a centralized, statewide Language Resource Center

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Favor	41	67.2	68.3
Don't know	13	21.3	21.7
Don't favor	6	9.8	10.0
No answer	1	1.6	-
Total	61	100.0	100.0

Question: “What’s your opinion about establishing a centralized, state-wide Language Resource Center?” (Three response categories were offered, the “no answer” was excluded)

One may ask how the type of organizations “vote” on the establishment of this center. For example, do state agencies favor this idea more than any other organizations? Doing a cross-tabulation of the data for the two “variables” (type of organizations and opinion regarding the creation of a language resource center) indicate a consistent pattern where respondents representing state agencies, including federally funded ones and public schools, show a high or unanimous agreement (see Table 9.1). Among county agencies, 13 favor the establishment of a language resource center as opposed to only 4 who do not favor the same. However, about a third give “don’t know” answers.

Table 9.1: Perceptions on establishing a centralized, statewide Language Resource Center by Type of Organizations (Number)

Responses	Favor	Not in favor	Don't know
County agencies	13	4	8
Federally funded	10	0	0
Public schools	3	0	1

Non-federally funded	8	0	0
Hospitals	4	1	3
Others	3	1	1
Total	N=41	N=6	N=13

Note: Actual numbers are shown here instead of percentages due to low or 0 frequencies of cases in some cells to avoid misleading interpretations. Total does not add up to 61 due to non-answer.

Among those who responded positively to the survey question of establishing a language resource center, the expectation is that the cost of services should be at par or lower than those available from the market. These comments from a state agency official are worth noting:

... we believe that the establishment of a centralized statewide language resource center would be beneficial if the cost to the agencies was relatively minor or non-existent. If the cost for services provided by such an agency was significant, it may be better for the State to negotiate a master agreement with a private vendor or vendors that all State agencies could use when needed.

Another respondent from a hospital setting says: "If there is a fee to utilize services provided by the Language Resource Center, it should be comparable or less than fees for existing services."

For the "not favor" answers, some have expressed unwanted fears that the language resource center may turn out to be a "white elephant," or a "tax burden."

Based on the above results, negative responses notwithstanding, it is safe to say that most of those responding to the survey welcome the possibility of having such a center materialize.

Probed as to what the functions of this center may be, the following tabulations (see Table 10) give readers a sense of the variety of services that should be done by the center. The results show that most respondents would like to see a data bank set up to keep rosters of interpreters and translators in the state of Hawaii. Related to this is the provision or certification of interpreters, making referrals to persons who are trained to do interpretation or translation services, and coordinating the activities of agencies engaged in interpretation, among others.

Other perceived functions of the center are related with training and orientation of professional interpreters and translators, standardization of tests/instruments needed for training these new breed of language professionals, certification, making referrals, and putting up a databank.

Note that these functions or services are predetermined choices asked of the respondents based on expert opinions. Room for some other functions is allowed in the category "Other," which requires elaboration. The respondents then check those functions they perceive as important for a language resource center.

Table 10: Services or functions expected to be done by the centralized, statewide LRC

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
a. Establish data bank for interpreters	42	68.9	68.9
b. Certify interpreters	39	63.9	63.9
c. Make referrals	37	60.7	60.7
d. Serve as clearing house for info	37	60.7	60.7
e. Conduct orientation	34	55.7	55.7
f. Coordinate training programs	24	39.3	39.3
g. Standardize tests/instruments	18	29.5	29.5
h. Other functions/services	5	8.2	8.2

Question: "What kind of services or functions do you expect this Language Resource Center to perform and deliver to the public?"

The question was then asked as to what organizations would be served by the center. More than half (52.6 %) of the respondents believed that this body should "serve all organizations," rather than limit itself to state agencies only (refer to Table 11). It must be emphasized here that not all non-state organizations (NGO) will be included in the coverage of the center. Only those receiving funds from the state.

Table 11: Would you prefer this Language Resource Center to serve only state agencies or serve all organizations?

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
a. All organizations	30	49.2	52.6
b. State agencies only	9	14.8	15.8
c. Don't know	18	29.5	31.6
d. No answer	4	6.6	-
Total	61	100.0	100.0

Doing another cross-tabulation for Table 11 with the type of organization reveals no changes in the observed pattern, and for which no tabular presentation is deemed necessary. Among county agencies, 15 said they prefer the center to "serve all organizations," with only two saying they like to see it "serving only state agencies." Federally funded organizations show the same trend of preference, with 4 saying they like the language center to serve all organizations as opposed to 1 case who thinks it should cater "only to state agencies." About a third of county and federally funded agencies appear undecided as they do not have any opinion on the matter.

Relevant to the above responses is the commentary from a respondent, who says: "Our need is mostly for translation rather than interpretation... If the LRC is open to all organizations in Hawaii, the priority should be for state/government agencies."

Finally, close to two-thirds or 61 percent of the survey takers are willing to use this new, statewide language resource center for interpretation and translation services, if made available (see Table 12). This number overwhelms those who said that their organizations would not likely use (20%) this center for language access services.

Table 12: Likelihood of using a new, statewide Language Resource Center for interpretation and translation services

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
a. No idea	8	13.1	14.0
b. Unlikely	10	16.4	17.5
c. Somewhat unlikely	2	3.3	3.5
d. Somewhat likely	21	34.4	36.8
e. Very likely	16	26.2	28.1
f. No answer	4	6.6	-
Total	61	100.0	100.0

Reasons for “not using” the services of the center are not necessarily negative. For some, it’s just that their departments do not meet or have a problem with LEPs. As one survey respondent has remarked: “Our department does not interact with persons of no or limited English ability.” Another respondent writes: “...in our experience requests from our clients or our employees for (interpretation and translation) services are very rare.”

As in Table 9.1, we compared the answers of type of organizations with Table 12. It appears that county agencies and federally funded organizations are much more inclined to use the services of this center for interpretation and translation. Among county agencies, 16 said they are likely to use its services as against 8 agencies who said they may not. For federally funded agencies, 8 cases indicate positive responses of usage, with only 2 saying they are unlikely or somewhat unlikely to use its services. It is interesting to note that some organizations (hospitals, public relations) are more prone to use the center’s interpretation and translation services, with 11 cases affirming this opinion compared to only 1 case saying the opposite.

From the foregoing data, it appears that the need for a language resource center exists, and that there is support for its establishment. Hawaii is one of the states in the nation that has only recently used a system of testing and certification of legal interpreters, which is a separate program for criminal cases funded by the Judiciary. However, such a system is yet to be put in place in other equally critical areas, notably medical and health care, and social services.

Certain models of existing programs on interpretation and translation services by other states may be emulated by Hawaii, bearing in mind its unique multicultural setting and variety of language groups to be served. There are still a lot of things to learn from the experience of others regarding language access services, as well as particular aspects of public life where language-related issues need focused intervention and funding.

Costs and Benefits Analysis

Apart from the data generated in the present survey, this study has made use of two important related studies on language access in the nation. These are the Alaskan feasibility for establishing a Language Interpreter Center,³⁹ and the nationwide cost-benefit analysis of implementing Executive Order 13166.⁴⁰ Their findings and assumptions, especially the latter's framework for cost-benefit analysis, lend considerable insights to the present study.

Costs

Except for a few agencies (e.g., Hawaii Judiciary and Department of Human Services), accurate and detailed costs of providing language assistance to LEP persons are not readily available in most agencies in Hawaii considering that efforts along this line are just made recently since the law was passed in 2006. Another major obstacle, perhaps, is the lack of a mechanism for internal, systematic generation and assemblage of data on language access in many organizations. This is a lesson learned from certain officials during follow-up interviews. Also, constraints imposed by time and other resources on the present survey do not permit the conduct of an accurate cost-benefit analysis.

Finally, there is a host of opportunity costs that cannot be woven into the analysis as these are essentially non-financial (e.g., time lost for bilingual staff volunteers and family members who serve as interpreters). This study has pointed out the pattern of interpretation by bilingual staff as the prevalent norm in Hawaii at the time of the study, even though the use of family members has been strongly discouraged by the Office of Language Access due to such issues as conflict of interest and liability.

Certain realities on the ground also suggest that more is yet to be desired in the provision of language access to LEP persons in Hawaii. Agencies have yet to systematize their language access operations and make this part of their regular functions. Many gaps still exist in data in terms of reporting, and new personnel have to be hired and trained to work effectively as members of a team. From our interviews, it appears that there exists some unevenness in the format, definitions, and overall quality in the kinds of data collected to allow for uniform and meaningful interpretation of the same.

Still, for many the absence of a line-item budget posed a problem in the implementation. The financial burden of providing services for language access faces an uphill battle, at least in the next couple of years, as Hawaii suffers from global financial meltdown and recession, now already manifest in budgetary cutbacks starting 2009.⁴¹

³⁹ Alaska Court System, "A Business Plan for the Language Interpreter Center," 2005.

⁴⁰ Office of Management and Budget, "Report to Congress. Assessment of the Total Benefits and Costs of Implementing Executive Order No. 13166: Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," <http://usdoj.gov/crt/cor/lep/omb-lepreport.pdf>. Henceforth, *OMB Report to Congress*.

⁴¹ Even non-state agencies face this financial woe, according to some officials of Catholic Charities (telephone interviews with Sr. Earnest Chung and Melba Bantay, both of CC). Securing grants, in which funding has dwindled,

Structural Contours of a Language Access Resource Center

Language access centers are a strategic gateway to a functional multicultural society like Hawaii. The proposed project, henceforth called the Language Access Resource Center (LARC), may be conceived as a unit of the Office of Language Access in the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

Listed below are suggested outlines or structural contours of LARC in terms of goals and supporting programs or activities:

1. Raise public awareness for LEP persons and their families through the media and public appeals – this may be accomplished by disseminating flyers, sponsoring seminars, website advertising, and promotional activities like contests;
2. Develop and maintain a centralized registry of qualified interpreters and translators readily available to organizations that may need help – a “roster of rosters” of interpreters and translators may be published and disseminated for all users and stakeholders;
3. Professionalize interpretation and translation through education, training, seminars and other fora – this program will identify agencies qualified to undertake the training and education of interpreters and translators;
4. Set up a rational procedure for certification of interpreters and translators – trained interpreters and translators will be required to take examinations to be certified to maintain, or assure, quality services;
5. Establish a system for developing and standardizing tests for competency of interpreters and translators – related to item 4, this program will insure that tests meet the required reliability and validity and that interpreters and translators must pass them as a basic requirement for the job;
6. Sponsor workshops to orient language access coordinators in all state agencies and covered entities to develop strategies on responding to the needs of LEP persons – these activities are essential for officials handling language access programs, who shall be updated from time to time on current and best practices in language access delivery and management;
7. Develop a system of referrals for quick disposal of LEP cases – this program will establish a realistic system to match up the needs of LEP persons with appropriate and qualified interpreters and translators for quality assurance purposes; and

hampers delivery of vital services to LEP clients, particularly immigrants from the Philippines, China, Vietnam, Cambodia and Micronesia.

8. Put up a databank to serve as clearing house of various information related to language access and made available to the public – all relevant information pertaining to language access will be collated and stored in a central facility, or “library,” accessible to all through the internet, flyers and actual visits to LARC.

These activities are a tall order; they require a modest budget to realize and put into action. The choice of funding these activities, assuming that an LARC is to be established, is deemed more important and strategic to the overall intention of the law on language access than selecting the option of “status quo.” That is, it seems prudent to create the center as opposed to holding on to the present practices of allowing every agency to establish its own language resource units to provide interpretation and translation functions with little or no regard to the quality of services.

Initial Budget for the LARC

Establishing the LARC has been estimated at \$800,000 for its initial operations in the first three years (2010-2012), broken down as follows:⁴²

2010 -	\$250,000
2011 -	265,000
2012 -	285,000
Total	<u>\$800,000</u>

Three years are hereby considered the minimum operation time to jumpstart the LARC, and give it some space for future sustainability. The initial funding of \$250,000 or a total of \$800,000, is the threshold needed to make the language resource center fly.

The annual cost assumes a full-time staff of 3 personnel, namely: the LARC Coordinator, a Language/Training Specialist, and an Administrative Assistant. Staff benefits, operating cost, and office supplies are calculated at 30% of the annual budget cost.

Above cost assumes that no infrastructure will be built for LARC within the first three years, and that it will be appended with an existing state agency (example, the Office of Language Access, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations) where it may share office space and draw (“borrow”) some urgently needed personnel on half time.

The LARC shall generate additional revenues through grants, training, testing and certification of interpreters and translators, subsidies and user fees. In addition, it may accept donations and contributions from both the public and private sectors.

⁴² For comparison, the Alaska Interpreter Center was established initially with a \$276,300 budget for its first year of operation in 2005. Available in <http://www.akijp.org/>. Henceforth, *Alaska Language Interpreter Center*.

A small committee may be charged with preparing detailed estimates of the annual budget, structure and operational activities of the LARC during the period 2010-2012, considering realistic goals, and available expertise and resources.

Benefits: Social Return to Investment

Establishing an LARC is expected to generate - directly and indirectly - incremental and long-range effects beneficial to LEP persons and the state, as compared to the scenario of "no LARC" or maintenance of the status quo.

This is made possible by systematically assembling information about interpreter and translator services, fixing standard rates for their professional services, certification of interpreters and translators, and other language access-related services put together in a "one-stop" shop.

However, a rough or proxy indicator of benefits may be had by using the concept "social return to investment" (SRI). SRI has been used here instead of the usual ROI (return on investment) expressed in financial terms during a given period.⁴³ This presents a qualitative picture of benefits, considering actual experiences provided in the literature, including potential or theoretical situations.

A. Benefits to LEP Persons

1. Enhanced and improved communication

As the language barriers are reduced, it is expected that the LARC will lead the way to build more confidence among LEP persons and enhance their basic understanding as a result of improved communication.⁴⁴

2. Increased participation/interaction with state programs, services and activities

LEP persons will be strongly motivated to participate in programs offered by the state agencies or covered entities (non-profit organizations receiving state funds). Frequency of contact, one of the four-fold tests used by the Department of Justice for evaluating language access programs, will thereby increase.

3. Possible decrease in misdiagnoses and other medical errors

Still a grey area to be mapped out in Hawaii's terrain of language access is the medical and health care sector. Difficult to understand medical concepts used in daily interactions will become a thing of the past when translated by qualified, competent and certified

⁴³ Use of SRI or "social return to investment" is an accepted concept in the academe (see London Business School, "Measuring Social Impact: The Foundation of Social Return on Investment," <http://sroi.london.edu/>) and has been applied in some feasibility studies such as the Alaska Interpreter Center study.

⁴⁴ Alaska Language Interpreter Center; OMB Report to Congress.

professionals.⁴⁵ For example, anecdotal evidence is given on the mistranslation of the Spanish word *intoxicado*, defined as “high on drugs” instead of “nauseous.” This situation led to a series of emergency room miscommunications in Miami and a malpractice suit that could amount to more than \$71 million for just one case.⁴⁶

4. Increased patient satisfaction and reduced cost

Studies⁴⁷ have pointed out that patients’ satisfaction increase with interpreters and translators around them to overcome the communication problem imposed by language inabilities, especially among shy mothers. LEP patients with professional medical interpreters were also found more likely to use primary care, resulting in lower cost and more access to preventive care.

5. Better understanding of legal issues and awareness of one’s rights

Legal documents, once properly interpreted and translated, will promote understanding of complex issues made difficult by their legalese nature. Hence, LEP persons will enjoy those services offered by competent interpreters and translators and become aware of their rights under the law.

B. Benefits that Accrue to State Agencies and Covered Entities

1. More efficient operation of agencies and covered entities

Once the LARC is able to provide for language access and related services to LEP persons, state agencies and covered entities will become more efficient in their delivery of much needed services, thereby improving their operational effectiveness. This scenario is based on the cost-benefit analysis of implementing EO 13166, where government efforts will be paid off when something concrete is done for language access compared to keeping the status quo.⁴⁸

More importantly, the model of a “one-stop shop” institution analogous to Alaska’s language access center may be the “wave of the future,” says Wanda Romberger.⁴⁹ She

⁴⁵ OMB Report to Congress.

⁴⁶ Marjory A. Bancroft and Barbara Reyes, “How to appeal to the evidence when justifying language services,” <http://dx.confex.com/dx/8/webprogram/Handout/Paper1692/GLADIATORS%20handout%20for%20resource%20bi%20nder-3%20FINAL.doc>.

⁴⁷ Mara Youdelman and Jane Perkins. *Providing Language Services in Small Health Care Provider Settings: Examples from the Field*. Commonwealth Fund Publication No. 810. April 2005; also E. A. Graham et al. “Health services utilization by low-income limited English proficient adults,” cited in Bancroft and Reyes.

⁴⁸ OMB Report to Congress.

⁴⁹ Wanda Romberger, “Language Access Centers: A Win-Win Idea,” <http://contentdm.ncsconline.org/cgi-bin/showfile.exe?CISOROOT=/accessfair&CISOPTR=123>; also Marjory A. Bancroft & Barbara Reyes, “Evidence for the necessity of providing language services in health care settings,” *op cit*.

finds that: "...it is more efficient to have a central point of contact when offices, agencies, and institutions require the services of an interpreter, rather than for each of them to keep and maintain a list of interpreters who may or may not be qualified for the assignment."

2. Avoid or lessen expensive malpractice suits

In the health care setting, untrained interpreters among bilingual staff, family members and friends are associated with poorer self-reported understanding of diagnoses, increased numbers of interpreter errors of clinical consequence, and higher rates of testing and admission from emergency.⁵⁰ Anecdotal evidence also suggests that many local doctors leave Hawaii to avoid malpractice suits.

Health care providers will then be able to avoid unnecessary and lengthy processes of training or looking around for qualified and certified interpreters, thereby saving money.

3. Lessen opportunity cost and achieve affordable training of bilingual workers

Reliance on untrained bilingual staff for free services could be expensive in terms of opportunity costs. Many of these bilingual staff and language volunteers may not be competent or fluent enough to do interpretation and translation activities.⁵¹

When a language resource center is made available in Hawaii, these problems can be avoided or diminished. Also, state agencies and covered entities need not go elsewhere for training of their bilingual staff, or contract the services of an agency from the mainland. The establishment of the LARC right in the state's backyard can help bring down the cost of such training.

Available Resources for Language Access

Aside from costs and potential benefits, the success of establishing and implementing a coherent, viable or meaningful language resource center would largely depend on already existing human resources who serve people with limited English proficiency.

There is a long and large array of foundations, associations and groups involved in interpretation and translation, which make their professional services available all over Hawaii, including those from cyberspace. These bodies have in their organizational structure a large pool of interpreters and translators that can be mobilized to support a Language Access Resource Center, just as the LARC can help them maximize their impact on the LEP population. Properly

⁵⁰ Dennis Kuo et al, "Pediatrician's use of language services for families with limited English proficiency," *Pediatrics*, Vol. 119 No. 4 April 2007, pp. e920-e9.

⁵¹ Bancroft and Reyes estimated that "anywhere from 20 percent to over 40 percent of bilingual employees and providers tested for language proficiency fail to prove fluency, *op cit*."

trained, coordinated and synchronized, these interpreters and translators (including the agencies that play host to their existence) will provide more quality services.

Several interpreter organizations are now found operating in Hawaii, apart from some online agencies in or outside the state whose services can be tapped through cyber exchanges. There is also a growing number of professional interpreters and translators. The list of these Hawaii-based organizations and interpreters is long, part of which can only be shown here (see Appendix C) and should not be necessarily construed as an endorsement of their services. They offer a variety of services on language access and other related activities that promote the welfare of LEP persons and the groups they represent.

To give an idea of what these agencies have been doing along the lines of language access, we cite here the Academia Language School as a good case. Apart from teaching the English Language, Academia devotes about 10% of its business activities for language access, and has a core group of 30-40 translators and interpreters.⁵² Typical of languages they translate/interpret are: Japanese, Korean, Chinese (simplified and traditional), Ilocano/Tagalog, French, Spanish, German, Samoan, Thai, Vietnamese, Chuukese, Marshallese and Tongan. Hereunder is Academia's "list of typical translation and interpretation done in the past:"⁵³

With the gov't agencies/organizations:

- 1) Translation of various informative forms into multiple languages (election process, notice letter, letter template, flow charts etc.)
- 2) Translation and voice recording of study materials for the employees, various brochures/flyers (for the public)translations - multiple languages
- 3) Interpretation at parent-student meeting, sign language interpreting at various meetings, Universities –surveys and newsletters material translation into one or multiple languages.

With private companies/organizations:

Law offices- 1) Interpretation-depositions, immigration matter, 2) Translation-legal and non legal documents (Birth Certificate, tax returns, divorce decrees)

Insurance companies/Medical - 1) Interpretation-depositions, medical exams,
2) Translation-brochures, letters, policies and informative materials

Tour agency, travel agent - Simultaneous interpretation for conferences, meetings, tours

Real Estate - Translation-House Rules, letters to tenants, notices, tax forms, business cards

Publishing companies - Translation-Advertisements, business cards, classifieds

Hotels/ food services- Translation-ads, web content material, menus

⁵² Telephone interview with Ryan Bailey, Academia Language School.

⁵³ Interview and email correspondence with Ryan Bailey and Ibu Francis Motoki, Academia Language School, Honolulu, Hawaii; also see company website, <http://www.academiaschool.com>.

Two other important private agencies that play a leading role in providing language access services to other audiences are the Pacific Gateway Center and the Susannah Wesley Community Center. Both deal with immigrant services and marginalized sectors of the Hawaii community.

Since 1973, Pacific Gateway Center has been known locally for delivering social services, and providing employment training for micro-enterprises among immigrants, refugees and low-income families, including translation and interpretation services in over 33 different languages.⁵⁴ The mission of the PGC is “to empower Hawaii’s low-income residents, immigrants and refugees to achieve self-sufficiency through skill-building and access to opportunities while respecting cultural heritages.” Among its recent projects is the Kitchen Incubator for those who engage in food service for a living. This facility operates 12 Department of Health-certified kitchens that small entrepreneurs - many of them are LEPs (Filipinos, Chinese, Vietnamese, Burmese, etc.) – can rent to prepare food for sale or catering.⁵⁵

Susannah Wesley Community Center, located at the heart of Kalihi, is a much older outfit that serves the marginalized sectors of the Hawaii community.⁵⁶ Still in operation after more than 100 years of service, it provides a wide range of programs and comprehensive services for the “forgotten and neglected,” both young and adults, who need counseling, skills development, mental health services, bilingual employment education and training, and other vital services not otherwise available elsewhere. It also deals with the large immigrant community of multi-ethnic groups like Filipinos, Samoans, Micronesians, Vietnamese, Laotians and Chinese, who line up daily for much needed program services provided by the center. Susannah Wesley Center reaches over 1,750 clients every year, with its 35 employees coming from diverse, bilingual backgrounds. “We meet a lot of elderly LEP people, some with mental health problems, aside from many delinquent youth who receive counseling from our bilingual staff and students on practicum,” says the program chief.⁵⁷

Also, there is now available to the academic public interested in professional training on interpretation and translation at the University of Hawaii at Manoa’s Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies (CITS).⁵⁸ CITS conducts intensive training for East-Asian languages (Korean, Chinese and Japanese), and has scheduled an intensive Summer Interpreter Training Program in 2009. This program provides for trainings in simultaneous and consecutive interpretation on Mandarin/English, Japanese/English, and Korean/English.

In this age of globalization and digital knowledge, there are agencies or individuals residing in the so-called “Worldwide Web” - or Information Super-Highway - which offer varied

⁵⁴ From company’s flyer, also see website, <http://www.pacificgatewaycenter.org>.

⁵⁵ Telephone interview with a PGC staff who prefers to remain anonymous.

⁵⁶ Company website, <http://gbgm-umc.org/swcc.shtml>.

⁵⁷ Telephone interview with Mr. Dominic Inocelda who works as the Center.

⁵⁸ See its website, <http://cits.hawaii.edu>.

language access information and assistance. One such important online agency is LEP.gov, a federal interagency working group.⁵⁹

LEP.gov promotes a positive and cooperative understanding of the importance of language access to federally conducted and federally assisted programs. This website supports fair, reasoned and consistent implementation of Executive Order 13166, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Title VI regulations regarding language access. This site also acts as a clearinghouse, providing and linking to information, tools, and technical assistance regarding limited English proficiency and language services for federal agencies, recipients of federal funds, users of federal programs and federally assisted programs, and other stakeholders.

Private entities are also available on the US mainland, such as viaLanguage, an online organization operating in Oregon, which has provided language services to some local agencies in Hawaii.⁶⁰ Anne Casey Foundation is another company whose services are widely sought in the area of language interpretation and translation, especially for immigrants and their children.⁶¹ The American Translators Association can help people find skilled translators or interpreters they need for a competitive edge, with a directory of searchable translators or interpreters from the internet.⁶² In the area of trainers training, particularly of health practitioners dealing with LEP clients, Cross Cultural Health Program in Seattle, Washington, offers valuable services.⁶³

Finally, there is an emerging, home-grown outfit known as the Hawaii Interpreters and Translators Association (HITA).⁶⁴ Most of the members, however, maintain offices in their homes, and can be easily reached through their email addresses or the association's webpage.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was conducted in response to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 67, SD1/SR40 SD1, Regular Session of 2008, that enjoins the preparation of a feasibility study on the establishment of a language resource center in Hawaii.

Using an online survey with 61 respondents, needs for and by LEP persons were assessed and costs of providing services to them estimated. In addition, the study interviewed selected officials and culled findings from related literature on language access, and made a cost-benefit analysis to determine the feasibility of creating a centralized, statewide language resource center.

⁵⁹ Federal Interagency Working Group on Limited English Proficiency, <http://www.lep.gov/index.htm>.

⁶⁰ See its website, <http://www.vialanguage.com>.

⁶¹ See website, <http://www.aecf.org>.

⁶² See website, <http://www.atanet.org>.

⁶³ See website, <http://www.xculture.org>.

⁶⁴ See website, <http://www.hawaiitranslators.com>.

Among the study's major findings are:

- Limited English proficient (LEP) persons constitute an average of 5 to 8 percent of total clients served by the respondents' agencies in the last three months preceding the survey. The top LEP groups are: Ilokano, Micronesians (Chuukese, Marshallese, Yapese), Japanese, Chinese, Spanish, Korean, Samoan, Visayan, Vietnamese, and other Pacific Islanders;
- Besides Asians, the demand for language access services by certain Pacific Islander groups (Chuukese, Marshallese, Pohnpeian, Samoan, and Tongan) is high and increasing, based on available state expenditures and other data on LEP persons;
- Data on financial costs indicate that more than half of the organizations surveyed said they relied heavily on free or voluntary services offered by their own bilingual staff, friends or relatives. This reliance has enormous implications on the cost and quality of language services;
- Interpreters and translators, including agencies that provide for language access services, are available in Hawaii. However, many of these interpreters and translators may or may not be qualified, or competent, to provide quality services. In addition, the language service delivery system in Hawaii remains fragmented, limited, and uncoordinated;
- Majority of the agencies surveyed favored the establishment of a centralized language access resource center that will serve all state agencies and covered entities; and
- Cost-benefit analysis suggests that a centralized language access resource center in Hawaii is necessary and advantageous to meet existing needs of or demand for language access services by LEP persons. Using a "social-return-to-investment" framework, the expected benefits appear to outweigh the costs involved.

Although the sample is small and the data are limited, the results of this study provide some basis for the establishment of a Language Access Resource Center (LARC) in Hawaii. There is an expressed need for language access through interpretation and translation, and the demand for it is great or increasing. Additionally, there is support for its establishment among the surveyed organizations and other stakeholders.

"The theory of language interpreter centers is replicable," so argues Wanda Romberger.⁶⁵ When implemented, the LARC as a language access institution will further the goals of Hawaii's language access law and comply with Title VI and Executive Order 13166 regulations by providing language access to LEP persons in Hawaii.

The idea of founding a Language Access Resource Center will be a step toward putting in place a central mechanism for language access, thereby maximizing the provision of basic services to LEP persons. Priority of what these services are, and where to deliver them, may be

⁶⁵ Romberger, *op cit.* Ms. Romber is Manager, Court Interpreting Services, Research Division of the National Center for State Courts, Virginia.

determined based on urgency of needs in legal, health, education, public safety, social services, and other domains.

The modal practice observed among the surveyed organizations is to use bilingual staff, friends and relatives as language volunteers to provide interpretation and translation services. Use of bilingual staff, while economically advantageous to an organization, is risky or a potential source of conflict of interest. Besides, most bilingual staff may or may not be qualified (or competent) for language access services. Hence, the need for their training for quality assurance purposes.

There is also a number of organizations that provide interpreter or translator services in Hawaii and on the mainland. However, their services are limited, fragmented and lacking in coherence. The proposed language center will address this problem by coordinating with these agencies' programs and activities, leading them to a more focused and synchronized direction.

While interpretation or translation is not governed by the dictum of "one size fits all," there should be some standard guideline to assure quality of result and observance of required ethics in handling language. Interpreters and translators must possess a certain degree of competency through proper education or training, and contribute to the reduction of language barriers imposed by limited English proficiency. The center will address this concern by setting up a system that will systematize testing and certification of interpreters and translators.

In Hawaii, certain language groups with LEP members deserve special attention. Helping them cope with English language difficulties is a major contribution to multicultural programs that will eventually make Hawaii's people overcome communication barriers and move forward to a healthier environment. Creating a language resource center will help translate this possibility to reality.

A relevant question now is: where's the money? Perhaps this is the most crucial aspect of the feasibility of this center, given the slowdown in tourism in Hawaii, financial cutbacks, and deficits in many state agencies. These problems considered, and in view of the strategic importance of language access policy, the state can still find ways and set aside seed money to materialize the center to jump start its needed operations.

The cost of establishing the LARC requires an initial appropriation of \$250,000 for the first year, or some \$800,000 to keep it afloat in the next three years. Such cost is relatively small compared to what LEP persons and affected organizations will reap as benefits in quantitative and qualitative terms.

Estimating the benefits by the "social-returns-to-investment" framework suggests that they outweigh the costs. Qualitatively, enhanced language access may be assured with the LARC established in Hawaii. Efficiency of agencies will be enhanced in the delivery of services, and LEP persons allowed full participation in various programs and activities. Additionally, satisfaction of LEP individuals will increase as they consume more services that are now open to them when language barriers are diminished.

Given the above premises, and acknowledging this study's limitations, it may be worthwhile to pursue the idea of establishing a Language Access Resource Center in Hawaii. Details of forming it, and the operational requirements of this new structure, may be done with a small committee, or task force, to prepare the blueprint of the LARC. This task force shall consist of major state agencies, the Office of Language Access and other stakeholders.

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Appendix A

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



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DIRECTOR

COLLEEN Y. LaCLAIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

SERAFIN P. COLMENARES JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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September 26, 2008

RE: Language Needs Assessment & Cost Survey

Dear Respondent:

The Office of Language Access (OLA), an attached agency with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, State of Hawai'i, is conducting a survey to determine the feasibility of establishing a statewide centralized language resource center in Hawai'i. The survey is part of a study that the Hawai'i Legislature requested us to conduct via joint resolution passed during the 2008 Regular Legislative Session.

We would like to invite you to participate in this survey. Your responses will greatly assist us in finding ways by which we can better address the needs of our limited English proficient population, develop resources for our service providers and help improve public services of such providers and other agencies.

Attached is a survey questionnaire consisting of two parts. Part 1 is a Language Needs Survey for users or agencies that may need language services. Part 2 is a Cost Survey to determine how much is being spent by agencies in terms of language services. Included in the survey are questions that solicit your views about the establishment of a centralized statewide language resource center. Answering it will take about 10-15 minutes of your precious time.

Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it to survey consultant Fred Magdalena, at 837 Kapahulu Ave #504, Honolulu, HI 96816 or at fred.magdalena@yahoo.com, telephone (808) 382-5160/ fax: 596-4647, on or before October 10, 2008. The survey is found on the internet, and where returns can also be submitted (after answering, click the DONE button), here: www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=gu42cDLVamfWzRtHxMLTBg_3d_3d.

Thank you very much for your attention to this matter. We look forward to assisting you with language access matters in the future!

Very truly yours,

Serafin Colmenares Jr.
Executive Director

Appendix B

2008 Language Survey in Hawaii

Office of Language Access
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
830 Punchbowl Street, Suite 322
Honolulu, HI 96813
Tel. 586-8730
Fax: 586-8733

Questions regarding this survey may be directed to Dr. Serafin P. Colmenares at Serafin.P.Colmenares@hawaii.gov, telephone 586-8730/ Fax 586-8733, or to Dr. Fred Magdalena at fred.magdalena@yahoo.com, telephone 382-5160 (mobile)/ Fax 596-4647.

The survey is found online, and where returns can be submitted directly, here:
www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=gu42cDLVamfWzRtHxMLTBg_3d_3d.
The completed questionnaire may also be returned by mail to Fred Magdalena,
at 837 Kapahulu Av #504, Honolulu, HI 96816.

Part I - Language Needs Survey

The purpose of this survey is to gather data on those you come in contact with who have *limited ability* to speak, unable to read, and/or write in English, and who *speak a language other than English*. We also seek data on how you interact with them, and what difficulties you encounter with such individuals or groups who are non-English speakers. The data you provide will help the Office of Language Access design an appropriate program to help improve public service.

By completing the survey, you give us permission to use the information you supply. The data you provide will be strictly treated as confidential, and will be used in the aggregate to guarantee anonymity. Answering the questions will take about 15 minutes.

1. Overall, approximately what *percentage* of your clients or customers in the past 1-3 months speak a *primary language other than English*?

- | | |
|----------------|-------|
| a. 0 (none) | _____ |
| b. 1% to 10% | _____ |
| c. 11% to 20% | _____ |
| d. 21% to 30% | _____ |
| e. 31% to 40% | _____ |
| f. 41% to 50% | _____ |
| g. 51% to 60% | _____ |
| h. 61% to 70% | _____ |
| i. 71% to 80% | _____ |
| j. 81% to 90% | _____ |
| k. 91% to 100% | _____ |

If NONE, skip to item 10

For the next questions, we want to know about clients who approached your organization for services recently who have limited ability to speak and understand English.

- 2.** Among those who have approached your organization in the past 1-3 months, please indicate the *number of clients* who speak exclusively any of the languages listed below. Make an *estimate of the number* if you have no record of it. Leave a linguistic group blank, or write 0, if nobody from that group has approached you.

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. American Indian/Alaskan (mainland USA/Alaska) | _____ |
| b. Arabic (Middle East) | _____ |
| c. Bangladeshi (Bangladesh) | _____ |
| d. Burmese (Burma/Myanmar) | _____ |
| e. Cambodian/Cham/Khmer (Cambodia) | _____ |
| f. Cebuano/Hiligaynon/Visayan (Philippines) | _____ |
| g. Cantonese (China/Hong Kong) | _____ |
| h. Chamorro/Guamanian (Guam) | _____ |
| i. Chuukese (Chuuk/Micronesia) | _____ |

j. Fijian (Fiji)	_____
k. Hawaiian (Hawaii)	_____
l. Hindi (India)	_____
m. Hmong (Laos/Thailand)	_____
n. Ilokano (Philippines)	_____
o. Indonesian (Indonesia)	_____
p. Japanese/Nihongo (Japan)	_____
q. Karen (Burma/Myanmar)	_____
r. Korean (Korea)	_____
s. Kurd (Iraq/Turkey)	_____
t. Mandarin (China/Taiwan)	_____
u. Marshallese (Marshall Islands)	_____
v. Marquesan (Marquesas Islands)	_____
w. Palauan (Palau/Micronesia)	_____
x. Portuguese (Portugal, Brazil)	_____
y. Samoan (Samoa)	_____
z. Spanish (Spain/Mexico/Puerto Rico/Latin America)	_____
aa. Tahitian (Tahiti)	_____
ab. Thai (Thailand)	_____
ac. Tongan (Tonga)	_____
ad. Urdu (India/Pakistan)	_____
ae. Vietnamese (Vietnam)	_____
af. Yapese (Yap/Micronesia)	_____
ag. Native languages in the Americas	_____
ah. Other non-English language1 (Please specify)	_____
ai. Other non-English language2 (Please specify)	_____
aj. Other non-English language3 (Please specify)	_____
ak. Other non-English language4 (Please specify)	_____
al. Other non-English language5 (Please specify)	_____
am. Other non-English languages/Unknown	_____

3. Do you have current or potential clients who speak some of these more rare languages? Please check those that apply.

a. Arabic (Middle East)	<input type="radio"/>
b. Croatian (Croatia)	<input type="radio"/>

c. Farsi (Iranian)	<input type="radio"/>
d. Haitian Creole (Haiti)	<input type="radio"/>
e. Iraqi/Arabic (Iraq)	<input type="radio"/>
f. Inuit (Canada, Alaska-USA)	<input type="radio"/>
g. Kurd (Iraq/Turkey)	<input type="radio"/>
h. Mien (Laos)	<input type="radio"/>
i. Phastun (Afghanistan)	<input type="radio"/>
j. Russian (Russia)	<input type="radio"/>
k. Serbian (Serbia)	<input type="radio"/>
l. Turkish (Turkey)	<input type="radio"/>
m. Uzbek (Uzbekistan)	<input type="radio"/>
n. Native languages in the Americas	<input type="radio"/>
o. Other non-English language1 (Please specify)	<input type="radio"/>
p. Other non-English language2 (Please specify)	<input type="radio"/>
q. Other non-English language3 (Please specify)	<input type="radio"/>
r. Other non-English language4 (Please specify)	<input type="radio"/>
s. Other non-English language5 (Please specify)	<input type="radio"/>
t. Other non-English languages/Unknown	<input type="radio"/>

4. Which linguistic groups (items 2-3) that have approached your organization are the most *difficult* to deal with? (*Difficult* here means inability to find competent local interpreters/translators.) You may cite up to *five* groups.

a. _____
 b. _____
 c. _____
 d. _____
 e. _____

5. What means do you use to facilitate interactions with clients who speak a foreign or non-English language? Please tell us approximately what *percentage* of these clients are served by the following means in an average month (past 3 months).

g. Language service not provided	____%
a. Agency-hired interpreter	____%
h. Managed without an interpreter	____%
b. Bilingual and/or bicultural staff not designated as official interpreter (not in their job descriptions)	____%
i. Professional interpreter (individual directly hired)	____%
j. Telephone interpreter	____%
k. Others (Please specify)	____%
d. Family member or friend (not agency staff member or professional interpreter)	____%
e. In-House interpreter (hired to do interpretation/translation)	____%
f. Interpreter unavailable	____%

6. Does your organization have a *regular function/organizational unit* that handles language interpretation and translation for clients with limited English ability that you know of? Please check the box that applies.

- ☐ a. Interpretation
☐ b. Translation
☐ c. None of the above

7. Does your organization ever use an (official) interpreter? (e.g., telephone interpreter, full- or part-time staff interpreters, contracted interpreters, or volunteer interpreters)

a. Yes	<input type="radio"/>
b. No	<input type="radio"/>

→ If NO, skip to item 10

8. Which one(s) of the following characteristics apply to the language interpreters used by your agency? Please mark any or all that apply.

- ☐ a. Attended special class or workshop on interpreting skills
☐ b. Attended special training in Interpreter Ethics
☐ c. Demonstrated knowledge (in both languages) of special terms or concepts
☐ d. Demonstrated proficiency in English and the other language(s)
☐ e. Successfully completed oral performance test in language interpretation
☐ f. Trained in interpreting for individuals with limited English proficiency
☐ g. Trained in Interpreter Code of Ethics
☐ h. Don't know (for any interpreters used)
☐ None of the above (for any interpreters used)

9. How satisfied are you with the way your organization handles clients who speak a primary language other than English?

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Very unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	No idea

10. Let's assume that you meet clients with limited ability to speak English and that there is an agency that can provide qualified interpreters/translators (who have completed coursework and passed examinations), when needed. Let's also assume that you have the authority to direct your organization to use or not use any such services. Would your organization avail of an affordable, easy-to-use interpretation service?

a. Yes	<input type="radio"/>
b. No	<input type="radio"/>
c. Don't know	<input type="radio"/>

11. Does your organization already have access to an affordable, easy-to-use interpretation service?

a. Yes	<input type="radio"/>
b. No	<input type="radio"/>
c. Don't know	<input type="radio"/>

12. Please estimate the number of potential clients who speak a primary language other than English in the coming year(s). Will there will be much more, more, about the same number, less, or much less?

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Much more	More	Same	Less	Much Less	Don't know

13. What's your opinion about establishing a centralized, state-wide Language Resource Center for assistance and coordination in interpretation/translation services and other related functions?

a. I favor its establishment	<input type="radio"/>
b. I don't favor its establishment	<input type="radio"/>
c. Don't know	<input type="radio"/>

14. What kind of services or functions do you expect this Language Resource Center to perform and deliver to the public? Please check any or all that apply.

- ☐ a. Certify interpreters and translators of particular non-English languages
- ☐ b. Conduct orientation and training for bilingual staff who can first respond to the translation and interpretation needs
- ☐ c. Coordinate/conduct training programs of state agencies and NGOs on language interpretation/translation
- ☐ d. Establish data bank or roster of competent interpreters/translators in Hawaii
- ☐ e. Make referrals to offices/individuals engaged in interpretation and translation of non-English languages
- ☐ f. Serve as a clearing house for information related to non-English languages and interpreting/translating services
- ☐ g. Standardize tests/instruments for language interpretation and translation of non-English languages
- ☐ h. Other functions or services (Please specify) _____

15. Would you prefer this Language Resource Center to serve only state agencies or serve all organizations?

- ☐ a. Serve only state/govt agencies
- ☐ b. Serve all organizations in Hawaii
- ☐ c. No opinion

16. Please describe your organization by checking its most important characteristic, below (pick *one*):

- ☐ a. Bank/Credit Union

- ☐ b. County agency/organization
- ☐ c. Church/religious organization
- ☐ d. Federally funded state agency/organization
- ☐ e. Educational institution (public)
- ☐ f. Educational institution (private)
- ☐ g. Financial institution
- ☐ h. Hospital/clinic/health agency
- ☐ i. Law firm
- ☐ j. Non-federally funded state agency/organization
- ☐ k. Public relations agency
- ☐ l. Tourism company
- ☐ m. Other for-profit organization (please specify) _____
- ☐ n. Other non-profit agency (please specify) _____

Part II - Language Cost Survey

This part of the survey is meant for those organizations that have one way or the other interacted with individuals, families or groups with *no or limited ability* to speak, read, write or understand the English language. It is particularly concerned with *expenditures* in such interactions.

If your organization has *no* known or reported dealings with such individuals or groups, please *answer* the questions that apply. All answers will be strictly treated as anonymous and confidential.

17. Does your organization ever use the services of a professional interpreter (someone with interpretation in his or her job description) to facilitate interactions with people with limited English ability? This might include in-house interpreters (i.e., those staff hired by your agency to do interpretation) or external professionals, including telephone interpretation.

a. Yes	<input type="radio"/>
b. No	<input type="radio"/>

If "NO," skip to item 23

18. Service providers, businesses, and other organizations in Hawaii may encounter individuals or families with limited ability to speak and/or understand English. Are there current or potential clients who approach your organization for services who *speak a primary language other than English*?

a. Yes	<input type="radio"/>
b. No	<input type="radio"/>

If "NO," skip to item 26

19. Please think about specific services or tasks relating to oral interpretation involved in interactions with people who have limited English ability. How much did your organization spend in the last fiscal year for the services rendered by the following?

a. Professional interpreters:	\$ _____
-------------------------------	----------

b. In-house interpreters: (not including training and recruiting)	\$ _____
c. Outside agencies	
d. Training/recruiting in-house interpreters:	\$ _____
d. Interpretation by telephone service:	\$ _____

20. Did you receive services from any of these people or entities below at no cost to your organization? Please check any or all that apply.

<input type="radio"/> a. Professional interpreters
<input type="radio"/> b. In-house interpreters (not including training and recruiting)
<input type="radio"/> c. Outside agencies
<input type="radio"/> d. Training/recruiting in-house interpreters
<input type="radio"/> e. Interpretation by telephone service

21. If your agency has used the services of oral language interpreters, please check one or more responses below that apply.

Have any of these interpreters -

- ☐ a. Been trained in interpreting for individuals with limited English proficiency?
☐ b. Demonstrated knowledge in both languages of specialized terms or concepts? (English and a particular non-English language)
☐ c. Demonstrated proficiency in English and foreign language(s)?
☐ d. Is there any such interpreter for whom you *don't know* about these characteristics?
☐ e. Is there any such interpreter for whom *none* of these characteristics are true?
☐ f. Successfully completed an oral/written performance test in language interpretation/translation?

22. Some organizations rely on bilingual staff-members who speak languages other than English to help facilitate interactions with clients with limited English proficiency, even though interpretation is not officially part of their job description and may not have been trained to be an interpreter. Approximately how much did your agency *spend last year on training staff* (including volunteers) in non-English language interpretation?

Estimated Training Cost: \$ _____

23. Does your organization use bilingual staff members who volunteer their language services for *free*?

Use bilingual staff language services for free:	Yes	<input type="radio"/>
	No	<input type="radio"/>

24. Please tell us about how satisfied you are with the way your organization handles clients who speak a primary language other than English. How *satisfied* are you with each of the following issues relating to oral interpretation services?

	Very unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	No idea/NA
a. Costs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Interpreter qualifications?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Use of interpreters?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

NA = not applicable

25. How *important* to your organization do you think these language interpretation issues are?

	Not at all important	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Very Important	No idea/NA
a. Costs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Interpreter qualifications?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Use of interpreters?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

NA = not applicable

26. How likely would your agency be to use a new, state-wide *Language Resource Center* that provides services on interpretation/translation if available?

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Somewhat likely	Very likely	No idea

27. Your comments are welcome about this survey.

Thank you very much for your time! We really appreciate your participation in this survey and hope to be of service to you in the future.

Code (for Office Use)

Appendix C

Preliminary Directory of Language Access Services

Translation Services On Oahu

Academia Language School
(808) 946-5599 1600 Kapiolani Blvd # 1215
Honolulu, HI

Ace Translations & Svc
(808) 734-0012 5304 Malu Pl
Honolulu, HI

Babel University-Translation
(808) 946-3773 1720 Ala Moana Blvd # A5
Honolulu, HI

Bilingual Access Line
(808) 526-9724 2100 N Nimitz Hwy
Honolulu, HI

Gloria So's Chinese Intrprtn
(808) 228-6355 404 N Beretania St # 210
Honolulu, HI

Han Young English Ctr
(808) 944-9520 1430 Kona St # 205
Honolulu, HI

Hawaii Immigrant Svc
(808) 536-3883 111 N King St # 505
Honolulu, HI

Japanese Answering Svc
(808) 922-0044 2155 Kalakaua Ave # 418
Honolulu, HI

Kawakami Yasuko
(808) 955-5257 1650 Ala Moana Blvd # 2205
Honolulu, HI

Keypoint Services
(808) 955-1159 2615 S King St # 2e
Honolulu, HI

Korea Translation Svc
(808) 955-1221 1411 S King St # 205
Honolulu, HI

Lmn America Inc
(808) 921-2349 444 Nahua St
Honolulu, HI

Nakamura Communications Inc
(808) 377-7040 5993 Haleola St
Honolulu, HI

Pacific Bridges Inc
(808) 842-0544
Honolulu, HI

Pacific Gateway Ctr
(808) 845-3918 720 N King St
Honolulu, HI

Pcas Printing & Design
(808) 534-1688 111 N King St # 312
Honolulu, HI

Sansei Type
(808) 486-9166 1221 Ala Alii St # 60
Honolulu, HI

Se Rah Lee Translations
(808) 942-9511 818 Sheridan St
Honolulu, HI

Se Rah Lee Translations
(808) 597-1916 1311 Kapiolani Blvd # 305b
Honolulu, HI

Silver Bridges Translations
(808) 531-1073 680 Ala Moana Blvd # 308
Honolulu, HI

Translation Services On Kauai

Carr Consultants
(808) 823-1191 5645 Hauaala Rd
Kapaa, HI

East-West Concepts Inc
(808) 332-5220 PO Box 527
Kalaheo, HI

Sakura System
(808) 823-0056 PO Box 3763
Lihue, HI

Translation Services On Maui

Eisenberg N
(808) 298-9128 3135 Lower Kula Rd
Kula, HI

Japan Connection Inc
(808) 572-5533 PO Box 785
Puunene, HI

Origin The Language Agency
(808) 573-1453 3125 Ua Noe Pl
Haiku, HI

Pacific Moon Translation
(808) 879-7158 938 S Kihei Rd # 329
Kihei, HI

Translation Services On The Big Island of Hawaii

Rubenstein & Rubenstein
(808) 883-9091
Waikoloa, HI

Note: The Office of Language Access has also prepared a list of agencies and interpreters, which overlaps somewhat with the above directory. Efforts to generate a comprehensive directory are still underway.